

**Written testimony for the Michigan Competitiveness Committee of the
State House of Representatives**

Re: HB 4714 (Medicaid Expansion)
June 11, 2013

Chairman Shirkey and members of the committee:

My name is Jeff Breslin, I am a registered nurse and president of the Michigan Nurses Association.

I can tell you that virtually every one of our 11,000 members has experienced the same thing, many on a daily basis. We'll send a patient home after helping them get better, knowing that we'll soon see them right back in the hospital. If they're not back on an inpatient floor, they'll be seeking help in the ER.

Patients simply stay sick and get sicker – all because they cannot afford their medications, outpatient care and preventative treatment.

As nurses, we can't fix that broken system. All we can do is fix our patients. But YOU, as legislators, do have power.

You have the power to do the right thing for all of Michigan. I'm talking about clearing the way for our state to accept federal funds to expand Medicaid to an estimated 450,000 working Michigan adults — including many veterans.

This should not be a partisan issue.

Yet we have seen no valid reason to delay bringing this influx of health coverage, federal money and jobs into Michigan. To be blunt, we have seen only politics obstructing progress, up until now.

MNA cannot, and does not, support unreasonable restrictions that certain legislators are trying to put on this expansion. That includes copays that will just put our patients back in the same situation of being unable to afford treatment.

Our obligation as nurses is to advocate for our patients, and that means putting their interests above politics.

We would simply ask that our legislators do the same.

Thank you.

The Michigan Nurses Association is the state's largest and most effective union and professional association for registered nurses, representing nearly 11,000 RNs statewide and advocating for them and their patients.